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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the strategic action areas and initiatives of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) for 2002. The six action areas outlined are: (1) national and international recognition and advocacy for community colleges; (2) learning and accountability; (3) leadership development; (4) economic and workforce development; (5) connectedness across AACC membership; and (6) international and intercultural education. Among the issues addressed in area one is AACC's involvement in negotiated rulemaking with the Department of Education to simplify student aid regulations. AACC is also preparing for efforts to reform the welfare reform law in order to encourage more postsecondary education and training for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients. Area two outlines, among other issues, a new project brief that describes activities at ten community colleges participating in the Teaching Scholar Partnerships program sponsored by the National Science Foundation. Area six cites the launching of AACC's new international recruitment initiative. The initiative is designed to assist member colleges in their international student recruiting efforts and to elevate the national and international profile of the AACC and community colleges in global education and exchange. (NB)

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President's Report on Strategic Action Areas and Initiatives

April, 2002

American Association of Community Colleges

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President's Report on Strategic Action Areas and Initiatives
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Strategic Action Area I: National and International Recognition and Advocacy for Community Colleges

1. The Office of Government Relations is focused on a variety of important tasks. A great deal of work is focused on staffing of the AACC ad hoc task forces on the upcoming HEA, Carl Perkins Act, and Workforce Investment Act reauthorizations (taking place next year). Bob Jensen chaired two successful days of task force meetings in Washington, DC, on March 21 and 22. A great deal of follow-up work from these meetings needs to be done.

   Staff members are also preparing recommendations to be submitted to the Department of Labor on alterations to the WIA eligibility criteria that have caused so many problems for community colleges. The ad hoc task force on workforce will be involved in developing the recommendations.

   AACC is also involved in negotiated rulemaking with the Department of Education to simplify student aid regulations. These negotiations have yielded some successes, especially in regard to GEAR UP and, we expect, the "12-hour rule."

   Staff members are also preparing for efforts to expand community college participation in Public Health Service nursing programs (with possible action later this year) and to change the welfare reform law in order to encourage more postsecondary education and training for TANF recipients. President Bush's plan is a step back in this regard.

   AACC is closely monitoring the planned implementation of the new SEVIS system for monitoring foreign students at US colleges and universities. We are continuing to work aggressively to secure co-sponsors to HR 2219, which would expand Hope Scholarship tax credit in a highly beneficial way. To date HR 2219 has 65 co-sponsors. In the budget domain, AACC continues to push for its priorities—Pell Grants, Title III-A, and other programs—working in concert with the Student Aid Alliance, in which the Association has a leadership role.

2. The Government Relations staff also worked with ACCT staff to organize a very successful National Legislative Seminar (NLS). Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, presented one of the keynote addresses.

3. Communications staff members have developed and implemented a college media outreach campaign. The campaign focuses on community colleges as essential

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institutions to resolve the current economic downturn and meet workforce retraining needs. The campaign presents a clear message to state policymakers that cutting funding to community colleges when they are experiencing record growth and offer the best hope for resolving economic problems is very bad logic. The campaign has two major areas of emphasis: 1) development of an action kit containing communications tools with common messaging for distribution to the colleges, and 2) development of a targeted outreach effort to media that are most influential among policy makers and thought leaders. The action kit is currently available on the AACC web site. Major national newspapers are beginning to write stories supportive of maintaining funding for community colleges.

4. Following the AACC "Crisis on Campus" teleconference which aired Nov. 13 in partnership with the LeCroy Center for Telecommunications, the Communications Office is completing a "suite" of products to assist the colleges with crisis on campus. A new handbook for presidents has been prepared for distribution at the Convention. In tandem with the handbook, the Association will conduct an in-depth, pre-conference session led by Larry Smith, executive director of The Crisis Management Institute.

5. The Ford Foundation has extended our current rural community college grant through June in order to prepare a report for public distribution. This report will be based on the Rural Community College Initiative (RCCI) national assessment report that was submitted to the Foundation and will focus on the role community colleges can play in community building and economic development.

6. Planning is underway for an invitational workshop on cybersecurity to be held in June in Washington, DC. Jointly sponsored by the National Science Foundation and AACC, the purpose of the workshop is to examine the role of community colleges in cybersecurity education. The workshop will advise program officers at NSF; college faculty in information technology and related areas; and representatives from business, industry, and government about how resources at community colleges could be harnessed and expanded to contribute to the nation's educational and workforce needs in computer, network, and information security.

7. AACC staff members are working with the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) to develop strategies to demonstrate to the Administration and Congress the role that colleges and universities are already playing in civic engagement and community service and to discuss ways to document and encourage further volunteerism.

8. AACC is mentioned in the *Microsoft Giving Annual Report 2001*. The section on developing a diverse technology workforce highlights two students from the College

of Southern Maryland, one of 63 community colleges in our Working Connections project, a $46 million partnership between Microsoft and AACC.

Strategic Action Area II: Learning and Accountability

1. At the request of the Lumina Foundation, AACC and AASCU have submitted a formal letter of inquiry to the Foundation regarding financial support for activities that follow up on the December 2001 roundtable meeting in Memphis on access to the baccalaureate degree. Proposed activities include: a joint invitational conference to focus on policy, practice, and context issues associated with access to baccalaureate education, a monograph describing what is occurring nationally on policy and practice issues, and outreach activities to target audiences and national, state, and regional media.

2. AACC continues to focus resources on nursing-related issues. I presented testimony before both CHEA and the U.S. Department of Education's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) in opposition to the recognition of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Although ACCT, AASCU, and NASULGC supported our position, we did not prevail. In fact, NACIQI, without any community college representative, voted unanimously to recommend continued approval for CCNE.

   I have been encouraging community college leaders in a few states to ask the presidents of the universities that hold CCNE membership to request CCNE to include community colleges or risk losing university membership.

   Bob Jensen has been coordinating an effort to ask CEOs to ask local hospital administrators to contact the AHA in support of our efforts to preserve the status of the AD Nurse.

   AACC continues to be "out-gunned" by professional nursing associations that have large staffs dedicated to advancing their beliefs. Staff members have prepared a proposal for a nursing initiative that is being reviewed by the Executive Committee and which was sent electronically to all Board members.

3. AACC solicited the participation of five key states to provide UI wage data for analysis. The goal of this second year of data collection is to refine the model for providing national estimates of student outcome and benchmark data for use by colleges. AACC staff promoted the UI wage data project and the Faces of the Future study to important constituency groups (NCCET, NCOE, and WDI attendees) with the goal of increasing understanding and participation in the projects, especially for noncredit activities.

4. AACC staff members are investigating ways to integrate the assessment model developed for the Rural Community Colleges Initiative into a more comprehensive method of evaluating institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

5. A new National IT Faculty Institute will be announced at the Convention. This joint effort of AACC, Microsoft, and the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies (NWCET, at Bellevue Community College) is a new component of *Working Connections*. It is designed to provide annual training and professional development opportunities for community college IT faculty in all 50 states. The Institute will begin this summer in Washington and Texas and will be extended to other states in future years.

6. A new Research Brief by AACC intern Kim VanDerLinden is now available. Based on the Faces of the Future Survey data, the Brief highlights different community college experiences for students with different reasons for attending. This Brief helps explain the complex relationships between students' reasons for attending community college, their expectations from the college, and their achievements at the college.

7. *Techcitement,* a new newsletter-style publication about the Advanced Technological Education program, will be distributed at the Convention and more widely afterwards. It highlights the impact of NSF's ATE program on faculty, students, and colleges.

8. A new project Brief describes activities at 10 community colleges participating in the Teaching Scholar Partnerships program sponsored by the National Science Foundation. The project supports undergraduate math/science/engineering/ technology students serving as classroom resources in K-12 schools.

Strategic Action Area III: Leadership Development

1. Staff members have been working on a number of recommendations that have emerged from meetings with the Board Leadership Development Task Force. These include a certification program for individuals who participate in AACC leadership development programs and the development of a series of Future Leaders Institutes.

   The proposed Leadership Certification Program would allow future leaders to earn leadership credits at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Credits will emphasize key leadership attributes identified by the AACC Leadership Task Force and will be structured to encourage participation in AACC leadership institutes, events, and activities.

   The Future Leaders Institutes are planned to begin in 2003.

2. The database for university leadership programs for community college administrators went live on the AACC web site in early November 2001. It includes 141 college and university higher education administration programs and incorporates an application form for other programs to submit for inclusion in the database. The web page also lists non-degreed, short-term programs and conferences.

3. We are also continuing our discussions with the League for Innovation in the Community College to offer a joint service to colleges and state systems to design and offer customized leadership development training.

4. AACC is beginning work on a monograph on the topic of CEO employment contracts. Poorly written employment contracts often do not provide the protection needed for a CEO to perform the best job for a college or a district. The chapters would be written in clearly understood language but would be reviewed by attorneys. Sample employment contract provisions might be included. The publication would be endorsed and marketed by both AACC and ACCT.

5. AACC and ACCT will soon launch an intervention service to provide assistance to colleges or districts in which there is a developing problem between a CEO and a Board.

6. I completed a pilot survey of compensation and employment benefits for CEOs of some of our largest community college districts. After evaluating this pilot project, we are exploring the possibility of expanding this service.

7. AACC has received a two-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation for $200,000 to support leadership development activities tied to recommendations of the New Expeditions project as outlined in *The Knowledge Net: Connecting Communities, Learners, and Colleges.*

8. AACC has published, in time for the Convention, the second and third Research Briefs in the Leadership Series. The most recent Briefs include *Career Paths for Community College Leaders* by Marilyn Amey from Michigan State University and *The Community College Presidency 2001* by George Vaughan and Iris Weisman. Both of these new Research Briefs will be mailed to CEOs at all AACC member colleges.

Strategic Action Area IV: Economic and Workforce Development

1. On a very tight and demanding deadline, AACC responded to a request for proposal (RFP) that would have involved community colleges nationwide in training the 40,000 new airport security screeners mandated by the November 19 Airport Security Act. Five early-responder colleges worked with AACC staff to develop the proposal with a

review by other colleges representing the nine Department of Transportation regions. An e-mail alert inviting all AACC member colleges to indicate their interest in being part of this project was sent on January 23, with over 200 colleges responding. In addition to the workforce implications, this proposal would have had an impact in raising the profile of community colleges among the media, policymakers, and business and industry. Although AACC was not successful in this process, we learned that it is possible to put together a proposal that views the nation's community colleges as a network of providers to meet national training needs. I thank the staff for the tremendous effort that went into the development of the proposal. Staff members worked long hours and gained experience that will prove valuable should a similar opportunity arise in the future.

2. In January, AACC hosted a successful Workforce Development Institute (WDI) in Miami, Florida. Staff members in the Office of Economic Development once again did a great job planning for the institute. Speakers included Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) in the US Department of Education, Emily DeRocco, and Assistant Secretary for Adult and Vocational Education in the US Department of Education, Carol D'Amico.

3. The US Department of Labor has prepared a Statement of Work for our continuing DOL grant. The most significant additions include partnering with the Employment Training Administration (ETA) in conducting forums with representatives of businesses in growth sectors of the economy, inventorying the capacity of community colleges to provide training to unemployed and dislocated workers as well as to new entrants to the workforce, and developing alternatives to current systems for the workforce investment system performance and accountability requirements for community colleges.

4. AACC intends to follow up on a recommendation from our Workforce Development Summit meeting of March 2001 to prepare a publication to help community college leaders establish mutually beneficial partnerships with local business. Bob McCabe has submitted a proposal to conduct the research and writing on this project. The Department of Labor has expressed an interest in funding this project through a grant to the National Alliance of Business (NAB).

5. AACC responded to an invitational request for proposal (RFP) from the SBC Foundation (Southern Bell) in March for a one-year technology workforce program targeted to individuals affected by the digital divide. The proposed project is modeled after AACC/Microsoft *Working Connections* project. We have high expectations that our proposal will be funded at the $1 million set by SBC. SBC is to announce the winner by April 22.

6. AACC is publishing two documents addressing nursing shortages and nurse education. A 16-page Research Brief will provide background on the current nursing crisis as well as basic facts on the training of Associate Degree Nurses. A longer monograph will explore these issues in more depth and will examine differences between training at the ADN and BSN levels.

7. AD Nursing has been added as a section under Hot Issues of the AACC Web site. The section contains the Nursing Issue Fact Sheet created by AACC and a variety of other resources. The resources include a PowerPoint presentation that reflects state and regional demographics and projected nursing shortages as well as documents from several states that promote awareness of the nursing shortage challenge.

Strategic Action Area V: Connectedness across AACC Membership

1. AACC staff will convene project conferences (Bridges, Horizons, ATE, Teaching Scholar Partnerships, and Working Connections) in conjunction with the annual Convention. These project conferences will connect practitioners and leaders from approximately 250 community colleges and their partners.

2. Approximately 25 community college presidents will be invited to serve on a Presidents' Leadership Group to make recommendations on ways to prevent alcohol and other drug abuse on campus. This group is an outgrowth of a joint meeting on January 25 between AACC and the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention. The group will convene this summer and the Higher Education Center will publish its recommendations by January 2003.

3. Twenty-five presidents attended AACC's Rural Policy Roundtable in Washington, DC, on February 8. Speakers included representatives from the Congressional Rural Caucus and the Southern Rural Development Center.

4. I am exploring the possibility of co-authoring a book on the topic of civility on campus with Paul Elsner. The book would bring attention to negative behaviors that are too often tolerated on campuses and suggest ways to improve campus climate.

5. AACC has implemented the endowment program that was authorized by the Board and has initiated a Founders' Circle campaign for those who contribute during 2002. Donors will be appropriately recognized at the Convention and in AACC publications. We will also be creating a visible recognition display at the AACC headquarters. Information is available on the web page and will be available during the Convention.

6. We are continuing our efforts to establish revenue-sharing agreements with companies that can provide quality services to our member colleges. We have concluded agreements with Youth Insurance Agency, Inc. (Student Insurance); Candidate Quality

Management (video conferencing services for pre-screening and/or interviewing candidates); and Peterson's (providing information on colleges to prospective students). AACC has had pre-existing agreements with Herndon Associates (student insurance), National Video Communications (marketing community college downlink facilities for distance learning events); and the Foundation For California Community Colleges (cooperative purchasing agreements).

Agreements that are currently being negotiated include 21st Century Leaders Profile (an assessment of leadership strengths); Inter-ED (a research and environmental scan service); Secure Works (Internet security service); WEB-CE (custom web content development services); and Forrest T. Jones (liability insurance).

Several other potential companies and services are being reviewed as possibilities for negotiating revenue-sharing agreements.

7. AACC has employed a new staff person to help improve and expand our Corporate Program. A new fee structure and new recruiting materials have already been prepared. We hope to expand our numbers of corporate members in the years ahead and to involve corporate members more significantly.

8. Following an intensive follow-up with colleges that had been members last year but have not yet paid for this year, AACC is very close to meeting its membership revenue projections for 2002. We currently are at 97.5 percent of our projection.

9. The 2002 *AACC Membership Directory* will be mailed to all members early in May.

10. A new Research Brief, *Community College Engagement in Community Programs and Services,* reports the results of a national survey on ways that community colleges contribute to the quality of life and lifelong learning in their communities.

Strategic Action Area VI: International and Intercultural Education

1.A major focus of the International Student Services and Programs Office during the past few months has been the launching of AACC's new international recruitment initiative. This initiative is designed to assist member colleges in their international student recruiting efforts and to elevate the national and international profile of the Association and community colleges in global education and exchange.

The recruitment initiative includes marketing, managing, and operating a series of semi-annual fairs in those countries from which most international students originate; an International Student Study Guide; and a specially designed International Web site.

The first series of Community College Recruitment Fairs are scheduled to be held May 2-15 in Taiwan, Korea and Japan. Eighteen colleges will participate in this inaugural event. An additional 20 colleges expressed interest, but deferred participation to the next round in Fall 2002.

The International Student Study Guide will be the only international student reference guide that is geared to community colleges. It will provide information about opportunities to attend American community colleges. Approximately 40 community colleges are participating in the first edition, which will published in late April.

An International Student Web site is being designed to offer advice, strategies, information, and guidance to assist foreign high school students who want to study in the United States. The site will be specially tailored for specific countries and individual needs. In addition, online (virtual) international recruitment fairs will take place via the Internet, thus extending reach worldwide without the need to travel. Over 30 colleges will be featured when the site is launched in May.

2. Efforts to raise the profile of the Association and community colleges in the international education arena have been made through a series of meetings with federal agencies, higher education associations, and international organizations concerned with international education. Furthermore, several meetings have been held with international visitors and the diplomatic community to explain the mission and values of America's community colleges.

3. AACC convened a meeting of the USA-UK Lifelong Learning Collaboration in cooperation with the British Council February 7 and 8 in Washington, DC. Topics included credentialing and skills certification, career training transcripts, leadership development, and global education. The meeting identified common areas of concern and desired outcomes.

4. Board Chair Pamela Transue and I just returned from a meeting of the World Congress of Colleges and Polytechnics in Melbourne, Australia. This was the second World Congress sponsored by a World Federation of associations similar to AACC. I was elected to a position on the founding Board.

5. The Stanley Foundation, in partnership with AACC, ACIIE, CCID and ACCT, sponsored a conference on "Integrating Intercultural Education into Global Education. The conference took place in early March at the Airlie Conference Center in Warrenton, Virginia. Approximately 25 leaders from community colleges,

associations, the federal government, and the business world participated in the 3-day event.

The charge to the group consisted of defining the characteristics of an effective intercultural program within the context of global education initiatives in community colleges. The participants identified strategies and measures that colleges can employ to implement and sustain such a program.

Dialogue focused on how to better define and enhance intercultural education on community college campuses. While this area often trails the implementation of international education, both are integral components of global education for U.S. community college learners.

Kent Farnsworth, President of Crowder College in Missouri, served as Conference Chair and will lead a discussion on the outcomes of this dialogue at the AACC Convention on Sunday morning April 21. A final printed report will be available this summer.

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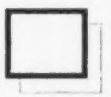

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